PSY 190 Psychology of Violence + Aggression

Psychology of Violence and Aggression (University of California, Merced)

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PSY 190: Psychology of Violence + Aggression

- What Constitutes Violence?
  - oDefining Terms
    - Eisner, 2009:
      - violence = intentional but unwanted infliction of physical harm on other human beings
    - Issues:
      - intent: How is it obtained? Deliberate vs. unconcerned? less or more harm than intended? following orders?
      - physical harm to humans: Threats excluded, as well as depriving liberty (ex-slavery) and unsuccessful attempts? What about non-human animals?
    - Some components of violence:
      - Aggression = overt behavior that has the intention of inflicting harm / physical damage on another individual
        - oaggresion diff. from, but often procedes, violence:
        - Reactive vs. Instrumental
        - oReactive Aggression = notable physiological arousal, "hot-blooded," i.e., accompanied by anger, impulsivity, affective instability, disinhibition.
        - oInstrumental Aggression = low physiological arousal (comparatively), "cold-blooded," predatory, coercive
        - oRelational / indirect / covert aggression = gossip, catty comments, sharing secrets, ostracism, sarcasm, etc.
        - o Physical / direct / overt aggression = hostility, anger, dominant behavior (approach behavior), violence, etc.
      - Arousal = a state of alertness or readiness for action
        - o necessary but not sufficient for aggression, and hence, violence.
  - oA Brief History of Violence
    - Is violence "evil," always "bad," a "disease," etc.?
      - evidence of violence is present among humans for at least the last 10,000 yrs.
        - osome scant evidence for its presence prior to that.

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- exists in all known cultures, through the amout varies across cultures and geographic locations

- Defining Violence
  - If it's a "disease" then it's the most persistent, interspecific, chronic disease ever observed in the history of all living things.
    - or perhaps something else.
- Violence as an Instrument
  - not instrument for music (obviously), then what?
  - acquisition of resources - one of many tools
    - work
    - prestige
    - charm
    - exchange
    - theft
    - trickery, etc.
  - "Many manifestations of violence in diff. societies and across long periods of time can be understood as strategic, goal-driven behavior, molded by adaptive processes during the evolution of human species, and organized + transformed in social institutions."

    - Eisner
  - Biological (evolution: gene / environment, intrinsic feature of human nature) and sociological (transformed by social institutions, perhaps plastic feature of human nature)
- What is Violence?
  - Intentional but unwanted infliction of physical harm on other human beings...
  - preceded by aggression (reactive or instrumental)
  - requires some level of physiological arousal
  - appears to be both intrinsic and changeable feature of human behavior
  - evolved instrument used for acquisition of resources.

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- Theory + Methods
  - Studying Aggression + Violence
    - Aggression:
      - simpler to study (but not easy)
        - psychologists - social, experimental, clinical - indiv. and smaller groups
        - Sociologists - No individuals - larger groups (bullying within school systems, tension b/w factors, etc.)
    - Violence:
      - much more difficult to study, especially experimentally
        - psychologist - mostly clinical
        - Sociologists - studying huge data sets, mapping out key variables associated w/ violence, and again, often investigating social, structural, cultural etc. issues
    - In both fields, studying either = exceedingly diff.
      - Correlation does not (necessarily) mean causation
      - therefore, experimentation is necessary to establish causal factors.
        - How do we set up situations, such that we intentionally manipulate variables in an attempt to cause aggression or violence to take place?
          - for aggression, this is possible but occasionally ethically questionable
          - violence, this is completely untenable, ethically
            - Studying violence is always post hoc and (outside clinical pathology), requires huge data sets, "happy accidents," very clear / sophisticated stats. modeling, also informed by history, anthropology etc.
  - Theory Needed
    - local vs. Meta:
      - Local - investigates biological, psychological, or social mechanisms

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- Theories of family violence
- Theories of child aggression
- Theories of sexual violence
- Theories of political violence ... or war ... or genocide etc.
  - Theories = useful + necessary, as violence is embedded in these contexts and the logic of such contexts needs to be understood to further understand the role violence plays within them.

- Meta - investigates overarching principles that help organize local theories.
  1) general mechanisms involved in diff. manifestations
  2) cross cultural principles result in manifestations over time
  3) integrate biological, psychological, + social theories
  4) show success in controlling violence in various scenarios based on similar principles

- If violence is a tool, then why use it?
  - What probs. does it solve?
  - under what circumstances are ppl likely to use it?
  - What role do social structures play in varying the likelihood of its usage
  - Situational-oriented or person-oriented? both? Why / when?

"No mechanism, no behavior; no input, no behavior"

- A Theory of Aggression: The GAM
  - Anderson + Bushman - General Aggression Model (GAM)
    - Human Aggression: any behavior directed toward another indiv. carried out w/ proximate (immediate) intent to cause harm.
      - perpetrator must believe behavior will harm target, and target is motivated to avoid behavior.

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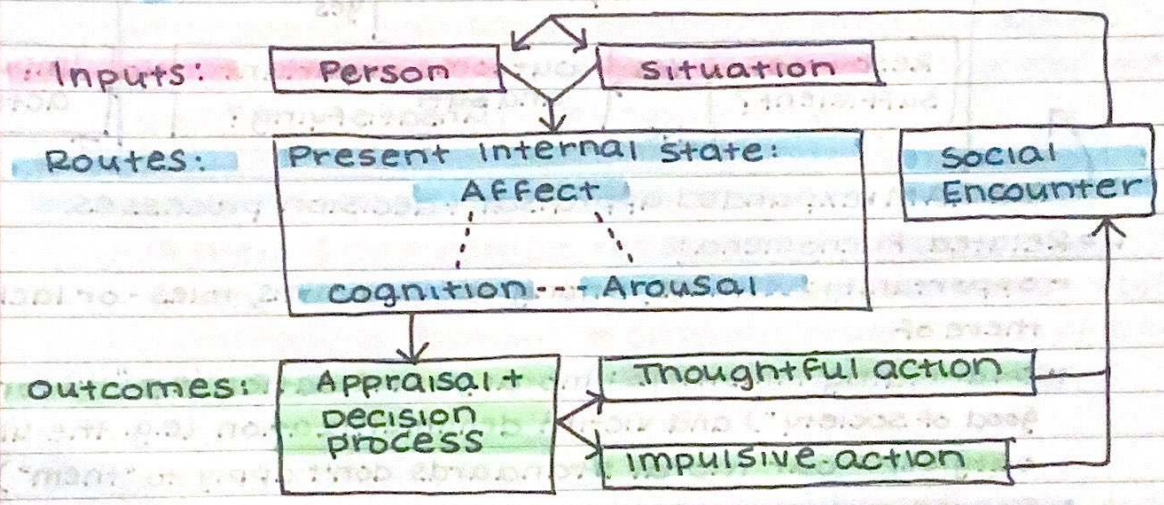
- Violence: aggression that has extreme harm as its goal
  - ex: severe injury / death
- Hostile vs. instrumental aggression: reactive vs. instrumental

- GAM draws on previous social/cognitive models of aggression
  - "A heap of stones is not a house"
  - GAM attempts to unit mini-theories of aggression (i.e. local theories) into a unified whole (i.e. meta-theory)
    1) person + situation inputs
    2) Cognitive, affective, and arousal routes through which imputs have impact
    3) outcomes of underlying appraisal + decision process



Inputs

- person factors: all characteristics a person brings to the situation
  - traits
  - biological sex
  - beliefs (values)
  - goals
  - socialization
  - biology
    - (genes, NTs, hormones, neurons, etc.)
- Situation factors:
  - cues
  - provocation
  - drugs
  - frustration
  - incentives

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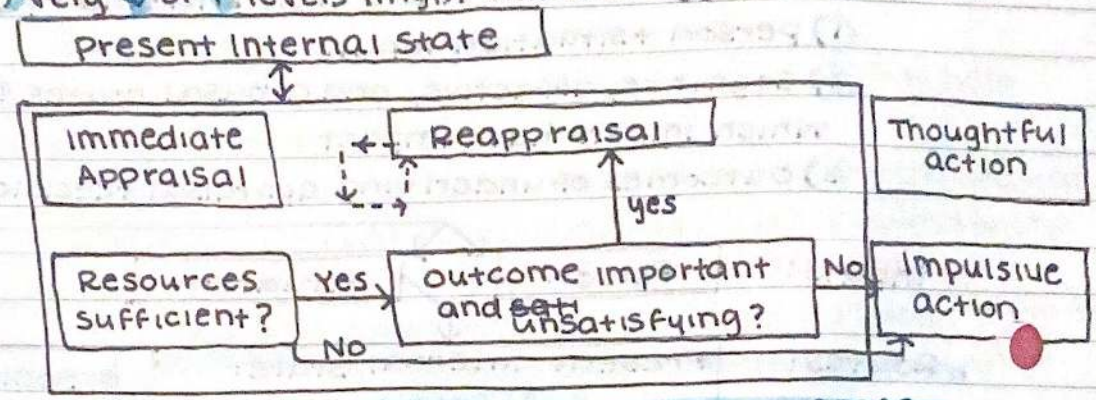
- Routes
  - Cognition: Hostile thoughts (e.g. chronically accessible), scripts (knowledge structures)
  - Affect: mood, emotion - effected by pain, temp, etc.
  - Arousal: 1) high arousal can strengthen tendencies
    2) irrelevant sources can cause misattribution of arousal
    3) very ↓ or ↑ levels might result in aggressive states.



The GAM: expanded appraisal + decision processes.

- Related Phenomena:
  - Opportunity: witness, strong social norms, roles - or lack there of
  - Overriding Inhibitions: moral justification (e.g. "it's for the good of society") and victim dehumanization (e.g. the ultimate outgroup - our moral standards don't apply to "them")
  - Shared motivations: humans are social primates and consequently have social "needs", threats to these often addressed w/ aggression.
  - Anger: anger provides justification, allows ppl to maintain aggressive intent over time, resolves ambiguity; primes aggressive scripts etc., ↑ arousal levels.
- A critique of the GAM
  - Ferguson + Dyck, 2012:
    - Assumptions of GAM:
      1) Aggression is always bad.

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2) Human brain doesn't distinguish reality from fiction
3) aggression = mainly learned
4) aggression = mainly cognitive
5) aggression = mainly automatic

• Assumptions of GAM:

① Aggression is always bad
- This is an moralistic claim, not an empirical one, and no evidence is provided to support it -
  - Research suggests aggression is best conceived of as existing on a continuum ranging from maladaptive to adaptive
- poor operationalization of aggression / violence - lab measures vs. real life - measures do not predict real world violence, i.e., "conceptual squishiness"

② Brain doesn't distinguish reality from fiction:
- violence on TV or video game = violence in real life...?
  - there is considerable research to refute this
  - very young children (3-5 yrs old) can understand context (fantasy vs. fiction) to evaluate truthfulness of claims.
  - when ppl age they learn to differentiate fact from fiction.

③ Aggresion = mainly learned
- Tabula rasa, or 'blank slate" perspective - ignores genetic, neuroendocrine, + other evidence suggesting biological components contributing to aggression.
  - clearly environmental factors contribute to aggression, but not as clear that learning = primary mechanism
  - learning plays a role, but relatively weak + dependent on context

④ Aggression = mainly cognitive
- Research suggests exposure to violent media primes aggression related thoughts.
  - Fill in the blank: KN_ _ E

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- important: ongoing theme in study of aggression - rift b/w measure + phenomenon

⑤ Aggression = mainly Automatic

- also claims aggression = automatic (modeling behavior is passive) and generates behaviors one must do rather than what one chooses to do.
  - may be partially true for reactive aggression, less for instrumental aggression where conscious processes play a pivotal role.
- ongoing investigation - thoughts may follow behavior rather than the other way around...

• To be fair...

- problems w/ the GAM are problems endemic to psychological science
- issues w/
  - sample sizes
  - NHST vs. effect sized
  - publication bias
  - meta-analyses
  - construct validity, etc.
- many of these shortcomings are being addressed

o Other Theories:

• Biological

- Sociobiology: understanding aggression and violence through the lens of evolutionary history - often species specific, but also mostly correlational
- Behavioral Genetics: understanding aggression + violence through ppl's genes - also highly correlational
- Hormones + Behavior: understanding aggression + violence by looking at sex hormones + cortison (reproductive competition + stress) - mixed support

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• Psychological

- Frustration aggression hypothesis: aggression + violence studied as likely responses to frustration, w/ the likelihood being enhanced by aggressive cues.
- Cognitive neo-associationist model + excitation transfer Theory: aggression + violence are a result of affect (emotion) alicited by aversive stimulation interpreted as anger.
- Social Learning Theory: viewed as a result of reinforcement from others, which can be direct or indirect (observed)

o Measures of Aggression

• Some issues:

- Is it measuring aggression? (beware of face validity)
- What else is it measuring?
  - Shoud we care? That is, for Ex., competition: are we interested in aggression in context of competition?
- Is it practical / ethical? How costly? How time consuming? how authentic? How labor intensive?
- Risk / reciprocity?

• Buss-Perry Measure of Aggression:

- 4 factors: physical aggression (PA), verbal aggression (VA), anger (A), hostility (H), total aggression score = sum of all 4
  - physical aggression: sum 2, 5, 8, 11, 13, 16, 22, 25, + 29
  - verbal aggression: sum 4, 6, 14, 21, + 9
  - anger: sum 1, 9, 12, 18, 19, 23, + 28
  - hostility: sum 3, 7, 10, 15, 17, 20, 24, + 26
  - Total aggression = sum of all 4

• Ultimatum Game:

- participant X given $10
  - decides how to split w/ participant Y
- If participant Y accepts, they keep offer
- If Y rejects, neither get anything (rational choice theory)
- aggression = rejection since anything >0 should be accepted

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- Point Subtraction Aggression Paradigm:
  - 2 players competing for highest score
  - 2 (sometimes 3) options:
    1) click button A to gain points
    2) click button B to subtract from opponent
    3) occasional option: click button C to defend points from being subtracted
  - aggression = number of times "subtraction" button pressed
- Taylor Aggression Paradigm:
  - 2 players competing in a reaction time task
    - clicking on a square as soon as it turns red; fastest time wins).
  - If player A wins given trial, they get to punish player B, via either a noise blast / electric shock (and vice versa)
    - winner also decides (prior to each trial) the magnitude and duration of punishment.
  - 3 measures of aggression: unprovoked (first trial), provoked (subsequental trial in response to opponent's behavior), and "extreme" - how many times they go to 10
- Hot Sauce Task:
  - takes place under guise of food tasting study
    - participant engages in task provoked by individual (variable)
    - later, asked to taste / rate food sample
    - Told to prepare similar sample for person who previously provoked them. Hot sauce is one of the ingredients of the sample they must prepare
  - aggression = amount of hot-sauce used.
- Some issues:
  - Is it measuring aggression?
  - What else is it measuring?
  - practical and/or ethical?
  - Risk / Reciprosity

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- History
  - Brief History of violence
    - As a starting point, non-human primates make excellent models of human aggression:
      - long-lived, intelligent animals
      - highly social
      - live in complex societies in which aggression plays an important role
      - aggression can range from mild (threats) to severe (murder)
      - Chimpanzees - coalitional
  - ~~Evolutionary~~
  - Environmental Factors
    - evolutionary logic
      - any product of natural selection is tailored to benefit an individual's "inclusive fitness" - aggression = not difficult
        - inclusive fitness: Reproductive success of an individual (and the individual's kin)
        - cost / benefit analysis: costs + benefits of aggression vary according to circumstances
          - consequently, aggression is modulated by environmental factors + not applied blindly, automatically, or indiscriminately
          - strategic use - when benefits outweigh the costs
      - energy expenditure
      - risk of injury or death
      - opportunity costs: time spent fighting is time not spent eating, reproducing, etc.
      - benefits: ↑ access to resources necessary for reproductive success
        - mates
        - food
        - status
        - territory

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• Mates:

- non-human primates - females provide egg, commitment to gestation, ~~location~~ lactation, + overall raising of young - hugely resource intensive.
  - males provide sperm... often, little else
- often find coy, choosy females + intensely competitive (i.e. aggressive / violent) males
  - aggression / violence still variable due to other environmental circumstances.
- Benefits: no mate, no reproduction
- Costs: some obvious - energy expenditure, risk of injury or death - some less obvious:
  - mate guarding: intensively vigilant association w/ a receptive female; results in decreased travel distances and ↓ food intake
    - size matters... height, mass, canines, etc.
    - limitation of sufficient nutrition.
- other factors: not jus females... fertile females
  - among macaques, 87% of male deaths took place during mating season
    - ovariectomized females artificially brought into estrus produced same results
  - among species that breed yr. round, violence varies as a function of cycles of female fertility
  - chimpanzees: cures for conception - sexual swellings and individual reproductive history
- operational sex ratio (OSR): number of breeding females available to each male each year
  - low OSR = intense fighting - hamadryas baboons at the London zoo in 1920's
    - overtime, low OSR favors evolution of large male body sizes, this can depend on social environment
      - orangutan morphs: big + small

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· Food:
- important to all, but particularly to females - gestation, nursing, carrying developing offspring, etc. - it is therefore a limiting factor of female reproductive success
- fights over food are generally less severe than fights over mates - a berry or leaf isn't worth a lost eye, etc.
  ∘ overt violence over food is therefore often restricted to rare and/or high value items.
- even abundance can lead to violence: focus for competition, energy for fighting, in group / outgroup competition.

· Status: high ↓
- status (or rank) can be thought of as access to food,
  ∘ among males high status = more offspring and ↓ stress in stable hierarchies
  ∘ among females, high status = higher infant survival rate, faster maturing daughters (reproductively), rapid production of young, better territories, more food.
- depends on age, fighting ability, and/or political skills

· Land:
- often defended by both sexes - beneficial to all
  ∘ defending access to food for self + offspring (for all) defending access to females (for males)
  ∘ defended when "economically feasible" to do so - resources, size, etc.

· other:
- murder is not uniquely human...
- infanticide: killing infants
  ∘ contentious literature - nonadaptive + adaptive explenation
    · nonadaptive - social pathology, accidental by product of generalized aggression
    · adaptive - killing rival's offspring eliminates comp. and brings females into reproductive status faster.

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- Killing adults: often accidental / incidental - inability to escape, death from infected wounds, etc. but not always...
  - Killing rivals eliminates comp. for status / resources
  - Killing unrelated rivals reduces genetic contribution of non-kin
    - also weakens numbers of rival coalitions in future conflicts

- Brief His. of Violence
  - Other side of the coin
    - most male chimps fights (for ex.) do not result in physical attacks or lethality
    - Reconciliation: friendly reunion b/w former opponents immediately after conflict
    - post-conflict attraction: most primates demonstrate more friendly contact after aggression than without any aggression
    - Valuable Relationship Hypothesis: Reconciliation will occur after a conflict b/w members of the same community, especially b/w individuals who stand to lose a great deal if their relationship deteriorates
      - Conversley, individuals who have no valuable relationship, for whom reconciliation would be worth little, prob. won't follow this process.
      - very sig. implications for economic - political arrangements
        - Interdependence = Attenuated conflict

- Brief History of Violence
  - Non-human primates summary:
    - violence = tool - used to navigate social + reproductive "economics"
    - not used blindly / indiscriminately - cost / benefit analysis
    - highly variable as a function of physical + social context
    - plays counterintuitive role in social bonds

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- Aggression + injustice (princip. of fairness)
  - aggression / violence may arise from perceptions of injustice

o Human Primates
- interp. of prehistorical "evidence" of violence = problematic
- violence vs. accidental trauma:
  - broken leg - fight or fall?
  - embedded arrowhead - intentional or hunting accident?
    - o uncertainty can be reduced by sheer numbers: Battle - embedded arrowheaas, stone chips (axes), random cuts, many ulnar + radial fractures (defensive wounds) found at related site.
  - pattern required + evidence = of scarce... "absence of evidense is not evidence of absence"
- we may explore violence in "prehistory" more later, however...
- rate of violence in prehistory = highly contentious
- argued by some that we live in the least violent time in recorded history
  - for your consideration: absolute numbers vs. proportion
  - reality vs. perception: ↑ awareness + biases.

- The Development of Aggression + Violence

o The Emergence of Aggression in Childhood
- Are very little ones (year or younger) truly "aggressive"? as we have defned it?
  - No
  - aggression requires intent to do harm
    - o requires understanding actions have consequ.
  - very little ones don't have ability to predict consequences of their actions + therefore cannot have intent
- Think of a tornado or natural disaster - they're destructive, but not aggressive, bc they have no intent

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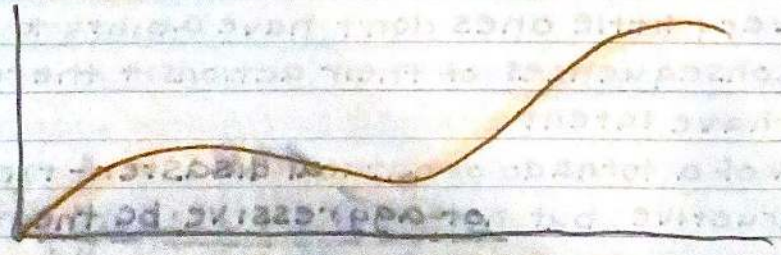
- nonetheless.. we still study children
  - by 3 months - recognize anger in adult's faces
  - by 6 months - can express anger in responce to frustration.
- Researchers can use these, + other indicators, to see which might be predictive of future individual diff. in aggressive behavior
  - Example:
    - Cardiff Infant Contentiousness Scale (Hay et al., 2010)
      - developed to address 6 aspects of use of physical force in social interactions + expression of anger in babies.
        1) doesn't want to let go of toys
        2) pulls hair
        3) hits out at others
        4) bites
        5) has angry moods
        6) temper tantrums
      - Hay + colleggues (2010) found reports from parents + others, when kids were b/w 5 + 8 months of age, predicted kids use of physical force against peers when observed in freeplay at 11-15 months
- Question - what does development of aggression look like over time
- Answer - Nonlinear



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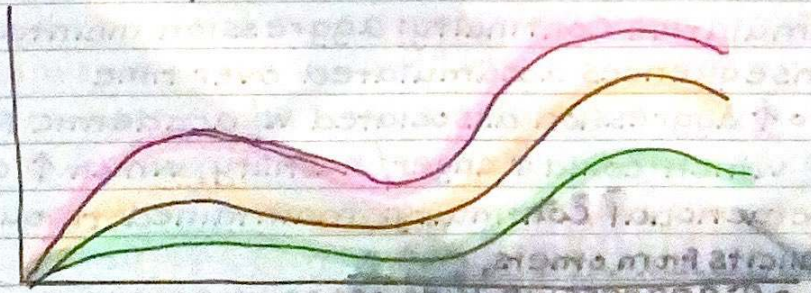
- Development of Aggression
  - Aggression in conflict w/ peers + adults become more frequent during 2 + 3 yrs of life
    - Ex: Temper tantrums + use of physical force (the "terrible twos" etc.)
  - Overt physical aggression ↓ after 30 months of age, but indirect + relational forms of aggression begin to emerge
    - facilitated by improvement of verbal skills and ↑ understanding of social relationships
  - Early school years, gender diff. become aparent
    - boys engage in more physical aggression
    - girls exhibit more indirect + relational aggression.
  - Within boundaries, aggression is considered a normal part of development.
  - Transient, w/ diff. amounts expected at diff. times of life.
    - age normative vs. not age normative
      - age normative - associated w/ typical development
      - Nonage normative - (high) levels of aggression are associated w/ cog. deficits, future behavior problems, higher injury rates, + even an ↑ likelihood of criminal offenses in adulthood
  - Transient, but stable



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- (Olweus, 1979): data based on 16 studies showed stability estimates of aggression.
  - One yr: r = 0.76
  - two yr: r = 0.69
  - three yr: r = 0.60
- (Barker et al., 2007): Childhood aggression predicts adult aggression.
  - 12 yr old study - majority of sample (87%) showed continuous ↓ levels of aggression at each time point.
  - However, highly aggressive subgroup at 12 (13%) showed continuously ↑ levels over time, w/ a peak at 18 yrs.
- (Huesman et al., 2009): 40 year study
  - Looked at proportion of participants who remained consistently high (↑ median) or low (↓ median) in aggression.
    - 37% of participants ↓ in aggression at 8 yrs old remained ↓ in subsequent measures
    - 35% of participants ↑ in aggression at 8yrs old remained in ↑ aggression group throughout study
  - Moral of the Story: aggression at a young age often not something we simply expect kids to "grow out of"
- 2 proposed "interlocking processes" help explain stability of agression.
  - Cumulative Continuity: aggression maintained bc of consequences accumulated over time
    - ↑ aggression associated w/ academic failure, which could ↑ anger/ hostility, which ↑ aggression.
  - Interactional Continuity: maintained through responses it elicits from others.
    - ↑ aggressive kids often rejected by non-aggressive peers, which will lead them to assoc. w/ aggressive peers.

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- Features of adolescent limited antisocial behavior:
  - emerges in puberty as a normative pattern of behavior
  - experience psychological discomfort during "maturing gap."
    - maturity gap: Cog. maturity developing earlier than emotional maturing
  - Have ↑ desire for autonomy
  - tend to desist from antisocial behavior when adopting adult roles.
  - then engage in social mimicry of antisocial models
  - associated w/ nonviolent delinquent offenses in adulthood.
- Features of life course persistent antisocial behavior
  - originates in early childhood
  - assoc. w/ early neurodevelopmental risk factors:
    - Cog. deficits
    - difficult tempurature
    - hyperactivity
  - exacerbated by high-risk social environment:
    - inadequate parenting
    - family conflict
    - abuse
    - rejection, etc.
  - assoc. w/ violent crime in adulthood

- Disorders
  - Oppositional defiant disorders: characterized by age inappropriate + persistent displays of anger, defiant, and irritable behaviors (lasting at least 6 months)
    - children lose tempers easily, arguing w/ adults frequently + actively defy adults' requests/ rules
    - often blame others for their own mistakes + are often spiteful or vindictive

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- **Conduct Disorder:** Characterized by severe antisocial and aggressive behaviors that inflict pain on others or involve destruction of property & denial of rights of others.
  - Can include bullying, initiating fights, cruelty to animals as well as theft, running away, + truency (prior to 13)
- Development of Emotional Regulation:
  - **Self-Control** - Capacity / ability to stop, override, or alter unwanted behavior
  - **executive function** - Cog. activities, that govern goal-directed action + planning of behavior, + enable adaptive responses to novel, complex, or ambiguous situations.
    - Think of it like this -- one's ability to display self control will depend on strength of their exec. functioning.
  - Spoiler - Indiv. self control + executive functioning is highly assoc. w/ individual's likelihood of exhibiting aggressive behavior - less self control, ↑ aggression.
  - Rolfe + Colleagues (2015, 2019)
    - participants (6-10 yrs. old) were told they would win prize if they can build a tower of bricks in a given period of time.
      - bricks manipulated to collapse
      - response to frustrating situation was recorded
        - maladaptive strategies - venting their anger, verbal + visual focuses on frustrating stimulus.
        - adaptive strategies - stayed focused on solution. (rather than problem)
      - same procedure done (w/ same participants) 3 yrs later, w/ slightly modified tools.

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- Development of Emotion Regulation
  - First 6-10 yrs: maladaptive anger regulation correlated w/ teacher ratings of aggressive behavior (acquired 10mnths later), + extent to which aggression was reactive in response to provocative stimulus.
  - longitudinal (across 3 yrs.): maladaptive anger regulation still correlated w/ teacher ratings of aggression (at both time points), also w/ student self reports of aggressive behavior
    - also predicted peer problems, indicated by self, ~~patient~~ parent + teacher reports.
- Other Factors.
  - Theory of Mind (ToM): ability to form mental representation of internal states of other people
  - Holl et al., 2018
    - Lower ToM predicted both forms of aggression, as rated by teachers. (8 yr olds, Study over 3 yrs.)
  - Somewhat related to ToM...
    - Hostile attribution style: tendency to attribute hostile intentions to a person who has caused harm when it's unclear whether harm was accidental / purposeful
      - a.k.a everyone else is an asshole...
    - Orobio de Castro et al., 2002: A meta-analysis including 41 studies w/ over 6,000 participants; confirmed link b/w hostile attribution style + aggression in children
    - Martinelli et al., 2018: more recent review of 27 studies, w/ children + adolescents, showed hostile attribution bias is related to both physical + relational aggression.
      - only reactive aggression (not proactive / instrumental)
- Social Factors
  - "Legitimacy attitudes" on aggression
    - Children who saw aggression as legitimate form of social behavior showed ↑ levels of aggress. behavior (Erdley 1998)

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- Beliefs about legitimacy of aggression can be seen as part of individuals' aggressive scripts, developed on basis of direct + vicarious learning experiences
- Sources of potential risk factors, from proximal to distal:
  - Family, peer group, neighborhood, broader culture/community
  - Family: well-established family risk factor for development of aggressive behavior = harsh parental discipline (Farrington, Ttofi, + Coid, 2009)
    - Relitively unsurprising, since children whose parents use harsh punishment come to believe aggression = acceptable form of conflict resolution
    - Further, parental aggressive coercion often triggers further oppositional behavior that leads to coercion
      - cycle becomes stable feature of the parent-child relationship + consolidates child's aggressive behavior over time (Dishion, 2015)
  - Peer Group - Contagion: Many studies demonstrate contagion effect of aggressive behavior among children. (Dishion, 2015; Rohlf, Krahé, + Busching, 2016; Husemann, 2017,...)
    - Hypothesis - as w/ diseases, exposure to peer aggression should particularly affect those individuals who are most susceptible (those who enter group w/ ↓ level of aggression.)
    - Jung + colleagues (2019), via multilevel modeling, demonstrated those w/ lower aggression, when entering class of aggressive children, showed biggest ↑ in aggressive behavior over time.
- Summary So Far...
  - Aggress. behavior emerges in early childhood, w/ boys > girls
  - age-normative patterns = aggression ↓ w/ age (conflict Rez)

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- Personality + Gender

o Personality Traits:

• Trait aggressivness: Buss Perry Measure of Aggression
  - validity + reliability demonstrated in many studies
• Anger + Hostility
  - ANGER: physiological arousal + preperation for aggression, + represents emotional component of trait aggression.
  - HOSTILITY: consists of feelings of ill will + injustice + reps. the cognitive component of trait aggression.

o ANGER:

• prominent measure of both trait + the state component of anger is the state-trait-anger Expression Inventory (STAXI; Spielberger, 1996).
  - meta-analysis revealed trait anger as a sig. predictor of aggressive behavior following provocation (Bettencourt et al., 2006).
  - Tafrate, Kassinove, and Dundin (2002) found that indivs. w/ ↑ trait anger experienced more anger episodes, + lasted longer periods of time, + more likely + engage in verbal agress.
• Irritability - habitual tendency to react impulsivly, controversially, or rudely at slightest provocation / disagreement
  - habitually irritable people were found to show ↑ levels of aggression in response to frustration
• Emotional Susceptibility - individual's tendency to experience feelings of discomfort, helplessness, inadequacy, and vulnerability
  - meta-analysis (Bettencourt et al. 2006) found that individual diffs. in emotional susceptibility predicted aggressiv behavior following provocation.

o Rumination + Dissipation

• Anger Rumination - perseverative thinking about a person meaningful anger-inducing event.

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- perseveration: getting "stuck" on a thought / idea
- Dissipate - To break up + drive off; to cause to spread thin or scatter + gradually vanish.
- High dissipators quickly get over provocative or hostile encounters.
  - Conversely, ruminators tend to mull over encounters for extended periods of time - more likely to plan + engage in retaliation.
  - as time passes after aggression elicit event, ↑ dissipators become ↓ likely to behave aggressively, whereas ↑ ruminators become ↑ likely to behave aggressively
    - However, content matters: Ruminating about anger is linked to aggression, but ruminating about sadness linked to depression (Peled + Moretti, 2010)

HOSTILITY:

- hostile attribution style: Tendency to attribute hostile intentions to a person who has caused harm when it's unclear whether harm was accidental or purposeful
  - attributional style not only affects the way which one interprets actions directed at them individually
    - also shapes social perceptions in general
  - Cognitive disposition, not an emotional one. (although, it may "ride along" w/ emotion based dispositions toward aggress.)
  - Script / Schema / belief system shaped through social experience and, like a script, the more it's rehersed, more easily + quickly hostile beliefs + expectations w/ be available.
  - W/ assumption of others' hostile intentions being so readily available, aggressive behavior more likely to result causing (-) interactions + reinforcing hostile script / schema / belief system
    - Hostile attribution style + aggressive behavior are mutually reinforcing

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